

I am informed that some of the lines have been graded for some time for the purpose of following up and serving a population that had gone into those regions in the expectation that the railways which were promised would soon follow. I am also informed that some of the people who have been waiting and waiting for the railway have been discouraged and are leaving those regions. If there are districts in the West that should be developed, regions where the land is good and which are capable of maintaining a fairly large population, and if they need these branches in order to retain their present population and to attract more population, I would take it for granted that these branches form part of the whole scheme of development of the Canadian National Railways, tending to increase our area of production through immigration.

Hon. Mr. BEIQUÉ: These things we have heard of for 25 years.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: It will be for each member of the Senate who has a greater knowledge than others of any particular region to bring in his testimony, because it stands to reason that a member from New Brunswick will know very little of conditions in Saskatchewan, or that a member from Prince Edward Island should not be expected to know very much about conditions in Manitoba.

Hon. Mr. BRADBURY: Or any other place.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I am approaching this question with an open mind. The Senate has within it men of experience who know the needs of the country. When I looked over the list of branches to be developed or completed, I saw just one small branch that I knew of, and I said, "This one branch is a necessity." It was at my door.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I will explain what it is, and if each member of the Senate who has a personal knowledge can bear testimony as to the necessity of the branch in his district, I will feel that the case is made and that everything is going on smilingly.

Hon. Mr. McMEANS: So would the rest of us.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: In order that my honourable friends may understand my point of view—

Hon. Mr. FOWLER: It is quite apparent.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I will give this illustration. There are some 60 miles of railway belonging to the people of Canada that start two or three miles from the town of St. Jerome in Terrebonne County, and run from there into the interior of the County of Argenteuil. I visited this region in my first attempt at politically evangelizing the population. I was 17. In that region I met the Hon. Sir John Abbott, who was Prime Minister of Canada, and there I made my maiden speech. As the population was bilingual—and I must confess I am not very proud of the English I speak now, but I positively murdered the language then—I spoke in English against the ex-Prime Minister of Canada. But I got even when he started speaking French. Later on I used to meet Mr. Abbott, and I confess that I felt a feeling of pride when he recognized me on the street. This region, which some 40 years ago was undeveloped forest, is dotted with lakes, and is a splendid country for summer resorts. The people of Montreal have invaded that region.

Last spring I was with the Minister of the Interior, who happened to be the member for Argenteuil, when he received in Montreal a delegation, headed by a good friend of mine who is a member of this Chamber—and who does not sit behind me—representing to the Minister the necessity of building 12 miles of railway. He said: "We have 60 miles of railway that belongs to the Government of Canada. The railway brings trainloads of residents from Argenteuil county to the junction near St. Jerome; there is a considerable movement of freight and passengers and it is a paying line. Yet, when it comes to within 30 miles of Montreal the passengers are dumped off at a small station and handed over to the C.P.R., which carries the freight and passengers to the City of Montreal, while the main line of the Canadian National Railway is within about 12 miles of that station." I see in his seat my honourable friend the ex-Minister of Railways (Hon. Mr. Reid), who agreed that there should be a line linking the Canadian National branch with the main line at that point.

Hon. Mr. GORDON: Does my honourable friend mean that it would parallel the C.P.R.?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: No; the Canadian National Railway parallels the C.P.R. running to Montreal or thereabouts; but a link is necessary to connect that 60 miles of railway running to St. Jerome with the main line passing near by. An attempt was made to build it; the ballasting was done, the ties